

via pacis

The Voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

MARCH 2020

WWW.DMCATHOLICWORKER.ORG

VOLUME 44, NO. 1

ORDINARY CITIZENS MAKE OPPRESSION POSSIBLE

By Madeleine Terry

Su Ann Donovan isn't a household name in the city of Des Moines, where the Catholic Worker Community exists. Most days, she wakes up, gets dressed, and heads to work just as so many do. Also unremarkable is that Su Ann works for the City of Des Moines in the Community Development Office.

Here, many other people show up to work every day, answering phones and carrying out their superiors' directives. At the end of each day, Su Ann and her colleagues at the city office return home, where they eat dinner and spend time with family before returning to work the next morning.

For those who live in tent communities near the river, Su

Ann's name is well-known. She issues the eviction notices that result in the Des Moines police bulldozing campsites, often with little warning to those who call the camps home.

With no place to build and maintain stable campsites or a suitable housing alternative, life outside in Iowa's winter is dangerous. Su Ann's eviction orders have potentially lethal consequences, as they are usually followed by the Des Moines police, who clear the campsites, leaving campers with no place to sleep. Moreover, campers often lose vital documents and survival essentials to the police and city workers who execute these evictions, leaving them more vulnerable to the elements and without documents they need to navigate social service bureaucracies.

Those who live in the camps' daily routine looks nothing like Su Ann Donovan's daily routine. They're greeted by a brisk wind and bitter cold that comes from living outdoors this time of the year. They're not strangers to pangs of hunger or to feelings of shame and isolation either. The support from

groups like JOPPA, Des Moines Mutual Aid, the Des Moines Catholic Worker, and a smattering of groups who fulfill vital needs for the campers such as tents, propane, food, and water, helps to mitigate the often deadly effects of the winter elements upon the campers.



Improved camp sites can be lively in one moment and then a ghost town in the next; the above sketch is of a camp site that was evicted by the city in December.



It is difficult to find shelter, even in the most abandoned places.

way? Was she herself trapped in a job where she felt she had no choice, but to follow the city bosses' directives? Is she a villain or herself a victim of our oppressive city policy? What I do know is that those who call the camps home are Su Ann's victims, and that tyrants only succeed because they have people who are willing to do their bidding.

Around the world and right here at home, whether London, Jerusalem, Lagos, or in Des Moines, those on the margins find themselves at odds with their local and national governments. One can see the same scene play out, no matter the location. Governments of differing creeds and models prey upon, instead of protecting, people in marginalized communities. Acting at the behest of their bosses, agents like Su Ann carry out their orders without hesitation. It's easy to see government as an impersonal

faceless entity, apart from those who work for it, or to see government represented by a notorious leader such as Donald Trump. For those in the camps, this is less abstract. Su Ann Donovan is the face of their oppressive government.

I called Su Ann's office for comment prior to running this story. As of press time, she has not returned my call. If I had a chance to interview her prior to press time, I wanted to see if she really understood the consequences of her work. If she did know, did it hurt her in any



Parade arrests

Protester Steve Andsager, 19, of Des Moines is dragged away from an Armed Forces Day parade in downtown Des Moines Saturday. Des Moines police officers Brad Wells (left), and Mike Niehring carry away Andsager after he refused to leave the parade route. Several other marchers were arrested.

Military parade resumed; war protesters arrested

Des Moines Register coverage of protest.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST: MAY 16, 1981

First Armed Forces Day Protest in Des Moines netted in 15 arrests; 9 of them were Catholic Workers

By Frank Cordaro

We are preparing for our fourth annual Armed Forces Day Rally and Direct Action at the Des Moines Drone Command Center to be held on May 16. In this process, I am reminded that the first Arms Forces Day protest in Des Moines also took place May 16 in 1981. Fifteen people were arrested; nine of them were Catholic Workers!

The following comes from my "What's Happening" column in the May 1981 *via pacis* on page three:

"The Armed Forces Day parade in Des Moines on May 16 brought together two very different perspectives on patriotism. By the

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via pacis

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

via pacis is published triannually. How to subscribe: mail, email, or phone your name and address to the editor.

THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER COMMUNITY

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition.

We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, shower, or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that advocate social justice.

BECOMING A DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER

We are open to new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member or email us at dmccatholicworker@gmail.com

MAILING ADDRESS

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515-214-1030

Monday CLOSED
Tuesday 3pm-6:30pm
Wednesday CLOSED
Thursday 3pm-6:30pm
Friday 3pm-6:30pm
Saturday 12pm-2pm
Sunday 3pm-6:30pm

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COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

Norman Searah, Ed Bloomer, Annie Patton, Charlie Faraday, Celestino Ramirez, Al Burney, Frank Cordaro, Ruth Hart, Patrick Stall, Jade Suganuma, Ryna-Ria Ignacio, Jakob Whitson, Madeleine Terry, Araceli Bentiz Moya

WEEKLY COMMUNITY LITURGY

Mondays, 4:00 pm. Berrigan House.
All are welcome. Call to confirm.

MONTHLY VETERANS FOR PEACE MEETING

Berrigan House. For more information, contact Allen Burney - 515-528-1742

WEEKLY AA MEETING

Fridays, 4:00 pm, Berrigan house

THE CHIAPAS PROJECT

Chiapas, Mexico
Richard Flamer
flamerrichard@hotmail.com



As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile. -Dorothy Day

Poetry and Art Corner



Tree of Stars by Todd J Berry (Blue tree and golden stars, twinkling)

Untitled - Undated

By Todd J Barry

Roses are red
violets are blue
if a pretty flower can be blue
I can too
from my heart to yours
wish you a blue, blue Christmas
“The King” (Elvis) is dead but not forgotten

Should I join the choir in heaven
The distant strains
Of a soothing lullaby will be sung by me

The clamor, clatter
And raging seas will all settle down
Time and space will be meaningless
As the sweet chorus of love
From heaven knows no bounds

Raise the cadence just a bit
So that everyone might hear
A moment in time to hold on to
For forever more n’ again
A sweet embrace
Carried on a melody
To bring that hushed comfort to you

A COUNTRY PRIEST ADAPTA-TION OF JERM. 20: 7-9

By Frank Cordaro
22nd Sun. Ord. Time 1987

God, you fooled me and I let myself be fooled!

You’re just too much for me, I fell for all that omnipotent stuff.

Since I’ve sided with you, I’ve been put down, called a fool, naive, a dupe for the communist, an unpatriotic wimp.

Whenever I speak your words it’s a scream, “SHELTER THE HOMELESS, SAVE THE FAMILY FARM, FEED THE HUNGRY, STARVE THE PENTAGON, DISARM OR DIG GRAVES.”

Your Word has done me no good. When I speak it, I get put down. I say to myself that’s it – no more!

I ain’t going to open my mouth again. Who needs it? Let some other sucker take the rap.

I want to be liked (People really want to like their priest).

I’ll not speak this foolishness again...

“But then it becomes like fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones; I grow weary holding it in. I cannot endure it...”

I scream, “SHELTER THE HOMELESS, SAVE THE FAMILY FARM, FEED THE HUNGRY, STARVE THE PENTAGON, DISARM OR DIG GRAVES.”

Vulnerable

By Madeleine Terry

This was my first evening going out as myself that didn’t require sneaking out. I’d spent the day coming out to people in my life. I wanted people to know what to expect of me before I transitioned. Having told everyone I was likely to run into, I felt free to go out as myself near home. Though I didn’t have any reason to go out, I decided to go for a drive and get a bite to eat. With no restaurant in mind, Wendy’s would fill the void.

Inside, I approached the counter. A woman on the other side greeted me and asked for my order. Reaching to pay, I felt my hands tremble as I fumbled around inside my new handbag trying to locate my wallet. Reaching across the counter with her gaze, she smiled warmly. Time stood still.

Instantly, my insides screamed. I don’t need your pity. I’m fine.

Standing solitary unaided, especially when one feels vulnerable was one of those expectations pressed upon men from where I came. I greeted offers of assistance with resentment, though I was always ready to offer assistance to others. Trying to fill out the role of a man, I’d paid special attention to this one convention, perhaps more so than actual men do.

Dropping the pretense, I exhaled. My gaze lifted to meet hers.

Mad Math

By Travis Wolfkill

“An error we refuse to correct has many lives. It takes courage to face one’s own shortcomings, and wisdom to do something about them.”
- Edgar Cayce

Have you ever tried to place an exact number on your worth as a human being? As a prisoner, numbers dominate my mindset. Roughly speaking, taxpayers relinquish \$35,000 a year, per inmate. It does not change if one skips meals, purchases their own necessities, pays off restitution, or works for mere pennies. The cost is substantially more for maximum security prisoners.

Here is more dystopian math: In 2002, I was arrested at the age of 19. I was not of legal age (21) to purchase or own a handgun, alcohol, or even gamble. Eighteen years later, I am not that same person. I understand crime and punishment, as well as paying a debt. However, the numbers it will take to incarcerate me for my natural life are staggering.

By the time I reach my 50s, the statistical odds of my reoffending are incredibly low, and annual costs of incarceration will undoubtedly be higher. Health problems associated with advanced age will only increase this number. As retired professor and justice reform advocate, Al Hays, recently said, “People that spend 25 years in prison usually aren’t much of a threat to public safety when they come out, so you are really keeping them in for punishment rather than to protect

public safety.” This carceral punishment is not meted out evenly, nor is it done humanely.

During my criminal trial, the judge proudly beamed, “This is the best system in the world!” This, being the United States’ justice system. Compared to cherry-picked nations such as North Korea or Iran, the United States is inarguably a paragon of progressiveness. It is not superior to the systems of Canada, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, or Scandinavian countries, to name but a few.

The numbers tell the story. In Iowa, the African American population is less than four percent, yet they are nearly a quarter of the prison population. African Americans are seven times more likely to be convicted than whites, despite the fact that crime rates are extremely similar in all racial groups. These disproportionately diverse subjects of the carceral system are forced into increasingly overcrowded facilities. According to the Correctional Policy Project, at the end of 2019, Iowa DOC prisons were 22.2 percent over capacity. Long-term projections predict the population will soar to 43.8 percent overcapacity in the next ten years.

I often consider the “tough on crime” trends prevalent throughout my lifetime. Since 1983, less than a dozen lifers had their sentences commuted. However, from 1945-1983 there were 211 total commutations. Another troubling fact is that no one in our state has ever been exonerated from a murder conviction due to DNA evidence.

Most states have more than a fair share of post-conviction DNA exonerations. This is to be expected when thousands were convicted before modern advances in forensic science.

In a rare ray of sunshine, Governor Terry Branstad announced the formation of the Wrongful Conviction Division in 2015, an organization that would come to be known as The Iowa Innocence Project. They have only one paid attorney assigned to the entire division. Again, the best system in the world?

A legislative forum was held in Waterloo, Iowa on January 24th of this year. It revealed a lifer bill is in the works. The bill aims to essentially raise the age for parole eligibility. Due to the Supreme Court ruling, it is unconstitutional to sentence juveniles to life without the possibility of parole, but those who committed their crimes while under the age of 18 are now eligible. The bill in question would raise the bar to 21. It will also provide those who have served at least 25 years a parole review.

Representative Baxter authored a draft and was quickly joined by Senator Wolfe as co-sponsor. Within days, the bill was quietly tabled and never officially proposed. If you wish to express support for the “Lifer Bill,” please e-mail Our. NewBill@yahoo.com Perhaps it will proceed next session. That is, of course, if the numbers add up.

• Mr. Wolfkill is an author, poet, and former musician. •

Growing Old with Norman

By Frank Cordaro

We are moving into a new phase of communal life at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. Our beloved Norman Searah now needs assisted living care to continue living in our community.

Norman has been at the Des Moines Catholic Worker longer than anyone else besides myself. Most of you know him through his regular *via pacis* column, “Norman’s Whereabouts.” In the early years, before my ordination to the priesthood in 1985, Norman was my sidekick. We went to every meeting and demonstration together. Back then, I spent a lot of time outside of Iowa protesting, visiting other Catholic Workers, and giving talks. Norman was my road dog.

When we were not on the road, Norman was the best at serving our guests. No one did it better and with a more generous heart. He worked with our guests much like Eddie Bloomer does now: when they needed something, Norman would get it for them, even when that required him to go far beyond the expected call of duty.

In the last few years, Norman’s health has not been good. After he suffered a minor stroke, we gave him retirement status, which meant Norman no longer had to attend community meetings and shifts. He was free to do anything he wanted and still receive room and board in the community. Now at 69, he receives Social Security. This income gave Norman a lot of freedom. By Catholic Worker standards, Norman is living high on the hog!

One of Norman’s favorite things to do in retirement is get on a bus, go to a destination, spend a few hours at his destination, then get back on the bus and come home. These trips could take

anywhere from a couple of days to a week or two. It all depended on Norman and who he met along the way. He made friends in the strangest places. His favorite city is New York City, and he loves spending a night or two at Grand Central Station. It was always

We who know him best could say he’s “stubbornly” independent.

What has changed for Norman and for us now is his physical and mental abilities. They have been deteriorating steadily over the last few years.

We all saw it, and we knew it. It was slow in coming, a gradual thing. Our communal instincts were to let Norman do his own thing as long as he could. We can’t do that anymore.

Norman’s need for assistance came to us in a direct way. A few months ago, we received a phone call from a social worker in a hospital in Harvey, Illinois, ten miles south of Chicago, asking us if we knew a Norman Searah. Norman had disappeared a few days prior to the social worker’s call. That in itself is not so unusual. What was unusual was that Norman was picked up by Harvey police while wandering the streets, disoriented and not aware of where he was. We sent Jakob and Ryna to pick Norman up from the hospital in Harvey, Illinois and bring him home. It was now clear to the whole community that Norman could no longer live his life with us without direct assistance.

We are living in a new phase of communal life. Norman needs a measure of assisted living care to continue living with us. The big question is whether or not we can measure up to Norman’s needs. I have taken on the duty to be Norman’s primary support person. As soon as Norman returned from Harvey, Illinois, we got ahold of Norman’s doctor and started the process of getting him a full physical

and mental checkup. Norman allowed me to have access to his medical records and ongoing medical
Continued on page 5



Norman and Frank holding a painting of them by Joe Taschetta from the 1980s.

spontaneous. Norman never planned trips -- he just took them. Over the years, Norman has demonstrated a fiercely independent spirit that has not changed.

GIVING

By Tony Ramirez

My name is Tony, and I am nine years old. I have been saving up money for the last year in three banks. One of them is “Spend,” which I use to buy toys, one is “Save,” which I use to buy clothing or extra goggles if I lose them, and one is “Give,” which I use to donate for charity. I have been saving up for the Catholic Worker House. I looked in the store and saw what they didn’t have, which was ramen noodles and razors. I went to Walmart and got those things, and when I got home from school, I went to shift and arranged the stuff. I handed out the ramen and razors to people when they came. The reason why I did that is because I like people being happy. Donating makes me feel good. It was a great moment in my life.



Definition of Service

By Lindsay Strable



Lindsay Strabel in front of Bishop Maurice Dingman's protest photos in Bishop Dingman House.

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, “service” is the work performed by one that provides help, benefit, and contribution to the welfare of others.

I’m often asked, “What led me to acts of service (volunteering)?” “What led me to the Des Moines Catholic Worker House?”

In approximately 2009, I naively joined a small group of people that were assigned to provide a meal one Friday night. I was forever changed. The dynamic of the Catholic Worker House opened my eyes to another world with which I had not been familiar, a world dedicated to service to others. Sure, I had volunteered many places before and would partner with other organizations after that, but there was something different about the intimacy in which guests were invited into the Catholic Worker House and provided a meal; a conversation, a connection. I felt that between the guests entering the home and the workers providing a service, bread was being broken. It was human-to-human interaction without the constraints and demands of the outside world; true fellowship in the most simplistic form.

See, to provide a service isn’t just about showing up. Anyone can drop off clothes, food, supplies, and more. While all of that is truly a wonderful gift, it is in the moments where you connect with others that service arrives. Making connections with individuals I have never seen before, may never see again, or have seen often is what drew me in to the opportunities of the Catholic Worker. I knew immediately I needed to expand this opportunity to others. I began a movement of inviting others to come alongside me to experience true connection and service to others. The reaction was humbling and overwhelming with so many wanting to step forward to serve; children, adults, families, friends, co-workers, neighbors and more.

I am honored to have been able to serve the Des Moines Catholic Worker for ten years. I am still forever changed.

“If you can’t feed a hundred people, then just feed one.” -Saint Teresa of Calcutta

CORDARO cont. from p. 1

time the parade was over, fifteen people had been arrested for trying to march in the parade without approval. Nine of those arrested were from Catholic Worker communities.

The whole thing started when the mayor, Pete Crivaro, and City Councillor Archie Brooks pushed to reinstate an Armed Forces Day parade after eight years without one. The parade was discontinued in 1973 because of the anti-war sentiment at the time. The parade this year was billed as an open event, inviting the whole community to be involved. Councillor Brooks was quoted in the Des Moines Register of May 7, 1981 stating, “If people want to protest, they can participate if they stay civil.... They could even be in the parade; it’s for the whole community.”

The Des Moines Mobilization for Survival organized our entry in the parade, a mock funeral procession featuring a child’s coffin flanked by mourners, with a person dressed

as Death to lead the way. We also hoped to distribute leaflets alongside the procession to explain the funeral.

“The best way that we can honor those veterans of past way,” our friend Bill Basinger, spokesperson for the Mobilization for Survival and himself a veteran, told the press, “is to make the public aware of the horror of modern warfare and the almost total civilian destruction in any future wars that this country might enter into.”

Major R.J. Mockenhaupt, the organizer of the parade, had other ideas. He let us know that under no circumstances were we going to march in his parade. In fact, it was never clear one way or the other whether we were going to be allowed to march or not. An hour before the parade, we were given permission to march if we did not use the coffin. We agreed, but were informed that the Major had changed his mind again, and we were refused entry into the parade. Most of us felt

that this was clearly a “freedom of speech issue,” and when the final denial was given, fifteen of us decided to push it to the point of arrest, while a larger group followed the parade along the sidewalk leafleting.

The star of the parade had to be seventy-five year old Larry Hutchison, a World War II veteran, who led the funeral procession in full uniform, carrying a sign that said, “Nuclear War Is Insane.”

We were arrested two blocks into the parade and were booked on charges of parading without a permit and disobeying an order of a police officer. The incident merited a front page story with color photo in the *Sunday Register*. We are being represented by poet and lawyer, Curt Sytsma, and the Iowa Civil Liberties Union. The trial date is June 25.

A good time was had by all, and we will keep you posted on the outcome of the trial.

Yoga Part 3: Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara

By Ryna-RIa Ignacio

The knowledge and application of the Eight Limbs of Yoga is a way to cleanse the impurities of the consciousness and allow a change in the way we think and act. According to the sacred Vedic scripture, *The Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, the way we think and act are influenced by three modes of material nature which can be conditioned by our place of birth, our family and friends, our current environment, our experiences, and so on.

In *The Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, Lord Krishna shares with Arjuna, “Material Nature consists of three modes -- goodness, passion, and ignorance. When the eternal living entity comes in contact with nature, O mighty armed Arjuna, he becomes conditioned by these modes (verse 14.5).”

“O sinless one, the mode of goodness, being purer than the others, is illuminating, and it frees one from all sinful reactions. Those situated in that mode become conditioned by a sense of happiness and knowledge (verse 14.6).”

“The mode of passion is born of unlimited desires and longings, O son of Kunti, and because of this the embodied living entity is bound to material fruitive actions (verse 14.7).”

“O son of Bharata, know that the mode of darkness, born of ignorance, is the delusion of all embodied living entities. The results of this mode are madness, indolence, and sleep, which bind the conditioned soul (verse 14.8).”

More details and characteristics of each mode of material nature are discussed in the scripture during this conversation between Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna.

As I read this, I began to contemplate on which modes I found myself in often and how I can be steadily situated in the mode of goodness. A structured, self-disciplined lifestyle is necessary for anyone interested in self-realization or enlightenment. The process of following the Eight Limbs of Yoga can guide us towards a more steady consciousness in the mode of goodness.

With all that being said, let’s continue

onto the next three limbs of yoga, Asana, Pranayama, and Pratyahara (the first two limbs, yamas and niyamas, can be found in our previous *via pacis* newspapers).

Asana is translated as “body postures.” Asana does not have to be a complicated and difficult sequence. Each of our bodies has different needs. It is important to find a yoga asana teacher that understands how the body works and can show you the best adjustments and poses for better balance in your body. Along with teacher-guided adjustments, we are able to adjust ourselves by becoming more aware in the way we sit and stand, as well as where we set our gaze.

Slumping in our seat and letting our heads hang over to look down at our phones could cause back issues in the future. Any kind of discomfort in our bodies diverts our focus from what is in front of us and will definitely distract us during meditation.

Practicing certain asanas can adjust our bodies in a way that is better for our overall health. With the right teacher and through certain sequences, we can gain physical and mental strength. Mentally, we can learn to be more tolerant, patient, disciplined, focused and conscious. With these qualities, it is possible to work towards living in the mode of goodness.

Once we feel more comfortable in our bodies and are able to calm our minds enough to sit in one posture, then we are able to practice pranayama, or breath control. A friend of mine told me that this is the bridge from the material world to the spiritual world because we are putting more of our focus on our subtle energies. By controlling our breath and senses, we can more easily control our mind and thoughts; discerning which thoughts are worth focusing on and how to act upon them. By calming the body and mind in this way, we can learn to calmly respond to all situations with a clear mind instead of instantly reacting.

Pratyahara is a withdrawal of the senses. To be detached from our senses means we are at

a point in our meditation where we are no longer disturbed or bothered by a little discomfort; heat or cold, loud noises, an itch, sore muscles, etc. We would be completely focused on one thought, prayer, or mantra. Aum (Om) is a very popular mantra that most yogis know, and this is a very important and sacred mantra. When chanted from the heart, one can eventually find peace of mind. There are many mantras that can help us practice deeper meditations and more easily experience pratyahara.

The Eight Limbs of Yoga can guide us to become more peaceful, mindful, and aware, and stay situated in the mode of goodness. Of course, I have to remind myself that this is all a practice and these are all ideas to aspire towards. We all have different desires and live with different levels of consciousness, so I hope you can find a way to integrate these ideas into your daily spiritual practices. As we learn to live more in harmony with one another, we are able to experience the beauty in a sometimes seemingly dark and troublesome world. The divine light within me sees, loves, and honors that same divine light within you. Namaste, Hare Krishna!



CORDARO cont. from p. 3

needs with his doctors. He also put me on his savings account at his credit union.

At this point, we have seen a number of doctors and social workers. While we are confident that we will be able to keep Norman with us, we also know that we will need help in doing so.

We are currently facing some interesting challenges, unique to our Catholic Worker ways. Norman lives on the first floor of Chelsea Manning Catholic Worker House. Manning House is our designated handicapped living space. It’s the only house where there are three bedrooms on the same floor with a bathroom and kitchen. In order to accommodate Norman, we had to rehab the first floor bathroom to make it handicap accessible. A big thank you goes out to Celestino’s cousin, Grant Scott, who underbid the job and transformed the first floor bathroom with the whole new look, complete with a walk-in shower!

We are now in the process of coming up with an overall plan to meet Norman’s ongoing physical and mental needs and keep him with us. All are welcome to come visit Norman any time. He still really likes talking to folks. The more time in the day he is engaged with people, the better he seems to do. Any help or guidance in our efforts to assist Norman

is most welcomed.

As for what growing old with Norman means to me, Norman and I share in common an experience of living out our personal “homecoming” stories at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. Every person has a homecoming story to live out. In our adult lives, we are all trying to get back to our original families in some way or another. Over the last 35 years, Norman and I lived our adult “homecoming” journeys together, as Norman left his home of origin, and I moved back to mine.

Norman often spoke of his family in North Brookfield, Massachusetts and how much he loved and missed them, especially his father and mother. Both Norman and I took our parents’ deaths very hard. We both lost our fathers first, then our mothers years later. Norman, unfortunately, has a lot of unresolved issues with his siblings back home, and at the same time, he has a great desire to return home one more time to visit old places and remaining friends and family. Through the years, he has lost touch with most of his brothers and sisters, and we are trying to help him change that.

One effort we have made is putting together a list of Norman’s brothers and sisters from his mother’s obituary notice, the groundwork here done

by Melonie Stall, Patrick’s angelic mother. We are connecting with as many as we can. Additionally, I promised Norman that I would drive him back to North Brookfield this spring for a visit to reconnect with old friends and family. Needless to say, he is excited about the trip back home.

Norman is the first Des Moines Catholic Worker that has come to need elderly assistance in order to remain living in our community, but some of us are not far behind him. We currently have six people living in our community who are over 60 years old. Ed Bloomer is the oldest at 72. Norman and I are 69, followed by Gil, Al, and Annie. As our younger community members come and go, the caretaking of elderly members will only grow greater in the next few years.

We are truly moving into a new phase of communal life here in Des Moines. When people now join our community, they are joining an intergenerational, intentional, full-service family. We continually ask ourselves if and how we will measure up to the intergenerational challenges of our expanding communal life. I hope we can do it well, as I am not far behind Norman! God Bless Norman Searah, a trailblazer for us Des Moines Catholic Workers, both old and young alike.



Bishop William Joensen, recently installed as the Bishop of the Des Moines Diocese, along with Father Michael Amadeo, of Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart parish stopped by the Worker on Valentine’s Day. We appreciated their visit and were thankful to have this opportunity to introduce the Bishop to our community. From left to right, Bishop William Joensen, Catholic Workers Frank Cordaro and Madeleine Terry, Richard Flamer, and David Polich, checking account signer and past trustee of the Des Moines Catholic Worker. Father Michael (not pictured) from Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart of Ankeny pitched in with our Friday food giveaway during their visit.

We Need a New (Old) Cargo Van ... Can You Help?



Our cargo van is a real important part of our work. It is the primary vehicle to pick up food and donations to the Des Moines Catholic Worker. We begged the current used cargo van in the fall of 2016. It’s costing us over \$300 a month for upkeep.



Joe Cordaro and Mike Mauro help serve dinner at Dingman House

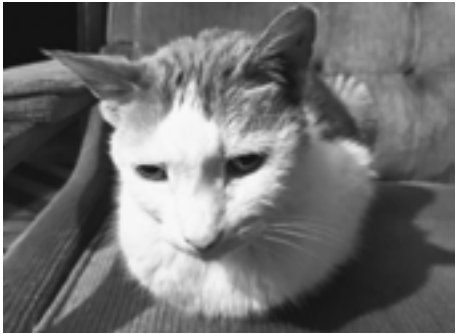


Photo by Des Moines Register

Ray Blase and Frank Cordaro participate in a protest of Trump’s Rally at Drake University.



Patrick and Jakob show up to the Saturday food store wearing similar plaid flannel shirts.



DeeDee Cordaro-Underwood serves her special red sauce!



Annie being her sweet self!



Tony serves dessert at Bishop Dingman House!



Celestion shows off his big catch to be used in a fish fry for our guests at Dingman House!



Frank Cordaro standing next to not one, but two, deep freezers full of donated meat! Thanks to Ray Blase and his Knights of Columbus!



Richard and Araceli say goodbye before Richard departs on a mulitple day journey south to San Cristobal de Las Casas, Mexico with a truckload of woodwork-ing tools. The tools are then dispersed to woodworking shops in Mexico that Richard has helped start as a way for Mexicans to find more meaningful work. He thanks his donors and the Des Moines Catholic Worker for making this work of mercy a reality! We are blessed by him and Araceli's presence in the commu-nity. Chau, hasta la proxima vez!

Caravan of Mothers

By Richard Flamer

To begin, I have elected to select a poem sent to me by a friend. “HOME” is a poem by Warsan Shire, a British writer, poet, and teacher, who was born in Kenya by Somali parents. She currently lives in Los Angeles:

No one leaves home unless
Home is the mouth of a shark
You only run for the border
When you see the whole city running as well
Your neighbors running faster than you
Breath bloody in their throats
The boy you went to school with
Who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory
Is holding a gun bigger than his body
You only leave home
When home won't let you stay.
No one leaves home unless home chases you
Fire under feet
Hot blood in your belly
It's not something you ever thought of doing
Until the blade burnt threats into
Your neck
And even then you carried the anthem under
Your breath
Only tearing up your passport in an airline toilet
Sobbing as each mouthful of paper
Made it clear that you wouldn't be going back.
You have to understand,
That no one puts their children in a boat
Unless the water is safer than the land
No one burns their palms
Under trains
Beneath carriages
No one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck
Feeding on newspaper unless the miles traveled
Means something more than journey.
No one crawls under fences
No one wants to be beaten
Pitied
No one chooses refugee camps
Or strips searches where your
Body is left aching
Or prison,
Because prison is safer
Than a city of fire
And one prison guard
In the night
Is better than a truckload
Of men who look like your father
No one could take it
No one could stomach it
No one skin would be tough enough
The
Go home blacks
Refugees
Dirty immigrants
Asylum seekers
Sucking our country dry
N*****s with their hands out
They smell strange
Savage
Messed up their country and now they want
To mess ours up
How do the words
The dirty looks
Roll off your backs
Maybe because the blow is softer
Than a limb torn off

Or the words are more tender
Than fourteen men between
Your legs
Or the insults are easier
To swallow
Than rubble
Than bone
Than your child's body
In pieces,
I want to go home, but home is the mouth of a shark
Home is the barrel of the gun
And no one would leave home
unless home chased you to the shore
unless home told you
to quicken your legs
leave your clothes behind
crawl through the desert
wade through the oceans
drown
save
the hunger
beg
forget pride
your survival is more important
no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear
saying,
leave,
run away from me now
I don't know what I've become
But I know that anywhere
Is safer than here.

Every year for the last 13 years, a group of mostly women have traveled 2500 miles across Mexico searching for their children who went missing while traveling through the country from Central America. The caravan brings together mothers from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. They then travel together across Mexico in search of their loved ones. In the 13 years since the caravan was first organized, 270 missing migrants have been located. Part of the purpose of the caravan is to de-nounce and highlight the issue of migrants disappearing while in transit through Mexico. Of the 270 migrants discovered, over 90 percent are men. Women are much harder to find, especially if they have been forced into the sex trade. The women from the caravan entered a town on the first day of this trip. The town was Tapachula, a border town on the Mexican side where they placed photographs and visited brothels, bars, and community centers. They have forged links with organizations some government agencies. They were met in Tapachula by representatives from small human rights groups, the Federal Agency on Human Rights, and a group from the Mesoamerican Migrant Movement. While in Tapachula, the women of the caravan found some clues relating to ten of the disappeared who were rumored to be in one of the three prisons in the region. The clues were developed when they exhibited fotos in the central square of the city. They subsequently, with a group of federal officials, visited all three prisons without success.

The mothers moved to Huixtla, in Chiapas, after four days in and around Tapachula. They visited for three days. Huixtla, on the coast, has long been a center or destination for migrants. The women roamed the bars and community centers and talked with whomever would listen. Two of the women spoke with several Central Americans who had been in Mexico for years without contact from their relatives. They asked the women of the caravan to help contact their relatives on the return to their countries. From Huixtla, the caravan left for Comitán, where they proceeded with a march to the center of the city. A Mayan cleansing ceremony was held here, as well as an exhibition of photographs of their sons and daughters. When the caravan arrived in San Cristobal de Las Casas, they marched from the Zocalo to the human rights center where they held a press conference. They were joined by half a dozen local indigenous mothers whose children had also disappeared. Numbers are hard to come by because of the transient population of the poor, but it was estimated by the staff of the Fray Bartolome de Las Casas Human Rights center that at least 70,000 Central Americans have disappeared on their way north while transiting Mexico. With hundreds of cadavers unearthed in the deserts of northern Mexico (Coahuilla, Sonora, Chihuahua and Tamaulipas), the State morgues are overwhelmed. In some areas, as many as 60 to 80 corpses are in refrigerated containers while the doctors who do the autopsies are performing six to eight each day. DNA samples are extracted and recorded, which the mothers of the disappeared check constantly against their own samples. The mothers check at each morgue that they pass through. From Veracruz, the women went to Atitalaquia, Hidalgo, where they were received by Father David Corchado of the San Miguel Arcangel Church who, along with his parish, had prepared a meal. The following day in Tequisquiapan, Queretaro, where some of the women split off to check the town, Margarita Reyna Lainez, 75 years old, encountered her son, Omar, whom she had not seen for over 14 years. Though they found some success in Queretaro, the caravan ran into some trials as it turned North. In the last few weeks, the group had been traveling to the north of Mexico with stops in San Luis Potosi, Monterrey, and Chihuahua, sometimes with a police escort, most often not. They ran into big problems in Jalisco, where drug lords threatened the group. They were forced to turn back to Monterrey where they are now continuing their inquiries. The caravan's desperate search - and the government inaction that made that search necessary - is a testament to the dangers that becoming a migrant exposes one to: “No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark”. Governments in the US and Mexico are at best apathetic and more likely hostile to migrants in their countries, and it falls upon everyday people to care for and protect them - across these women in Mexico have shouldered bravely.

Electioneering in the Apocalypse

By Patrick Stall

Every four years or so, a dark season descends upon Iowa. An eldritch cohort of icor-coated fiends invades our medium-sized cities and small towns, and for more than a year *The Des Moines Register* can comment on nothing except the horrors they bring. In February, after a year of mortal combat between rival fan groups, associated blood rituals, and a general atmosphere of violence, a series of neighborhood-level screaming matches brings an end to what the rest of the country knows as the Iowa caucuses.

This year's caucus season has given hope to the most decent and upstanding section of the electorate: Bernie Sanders, after an upstart campaign in the last election, is fast becoming the Democratic Party's frontrunner. Even the most crusty and hardened critics of the American system here at the Catholic Worker find some measure of inspiration in Sanders'

campaign. The reemergence in mainstream discourse of the language of class warfare, the mobilization of millions for a obstinately left cause, and the distant prospect of a self-described socialist in the White House are things few of us believed could happen ten years ago, yet have emerged through Bernie's campaign. For serious left-wing radicals, many of whom long ago renounced voting or electoral action as a useful mechanism, the mass popularity of Sanders' campaign compels us to grapple with this phenomenon, as well as with our dismissal of electoral politics broadly.

The caucus is now over, and the politicians and media freaks have been exorcised from our fair state. We now have a moment's respite and can take this opportunity to examine the proper relationship between the revolutionary left and what his supporters call "The Bernie Sanders Movement." First, the obvious critique:

though his campaign has undeniably brought with it an increased profile of basic concepts of socialism, to the broader American public, the Western-European flavor of social democracy Sanders preaches leaves much to be desired in terms of policy aspirations. His platform calls for relatively minute wealth redistribution, and the proposed Green New Deal does not go far enough to stem the worst of climate change; he simply does not go far enough. More to the point, America's role as the enforcer of the world-capitalist economic system would see few changes under Bernie Sanders. He cannot bring himself to critique Israel in a serious way and will leave the thousands of United States foreign military bases open, along with their repressive and dangerous function on the world stage. These shortcomings should be expected. The ballot box forces all candidates into a strong rightward drift in the best of circumstances, and

Continued on page 10

The Journey Continues

By Ryna-Ria Ignacio

Two years have passed since I moved into the Des Moines Catholic worker. Two years full of service, learning how to live in community, and having abundance in all that we need. I've spent a lot of time being sous-chef and dishwasher.

I've helped carry a lot of boxes full of good food to share with everyone and helped care for a beautiful, bountiful garden. I've watched a monarch caterpillar grow into a butterfly, went on many walks around the neighborhood with Jakob while singing kirtan (the chanting of God's holy name) with our mrdanga drum and kartala bells. I've practiced yoga in the Dingman house attic and the Berrigan house library with many friends, including Jade and Maddie. I've hared gossip and laughs with Annie(belle) and Araceli. I've "Meowed" back

at Vladimir because I can't pet him. I've had monthly lunch dates and tea times with Eddie and Jakob, weekly talks and haircuts with Frank and Norman, enneagram with Ruth, Charlie, and Celestino. I joined in on jam sessions in Chelsea Manning house basement, attended some prison letter writings at a nearby church with Jade and Patrick, and enjoyed occasional community dinners at Rachel Corrie house and Berrigan house. I've contemplated during our Friday night liturgies and had a yoga philosophy gathering.

We had friends and family come from far away to meet us at Easter Lake park where my best friend and I got married! We adopted a sweet dog named Jaeyna, and spent a lot of time reading and writing.

I finished a 2,000 piece Claude Monet

puzzle, and read several books. We've had plenty of time for rest, but also found time to travel to several other Catholic Worker communities. There are many, many things to reflect on! Living here has given me the fortunate opportunity to have enough time and space to study and practice my faith in the way I feel is best.

With all memories and more in my hear, it is very bittersweet to say that Jakob and I are now leaving to deepen our faith and live in a Hare Krishna community in Kansas City, Missouri.

I have so much gratitude for my overall experience here; everyone that I have met and all the great things I have learned. May God bless us with Their peace and love along all our journeys!

Going Veg at Des Moines Catholic Worker

By Jakob Whitson

When I arrived at the Des Moines Catholic Worker in May of 2017, I surpassed the four year mark of practicing a vegetarian diet. I admit, there were a couple occasions during those four years when I partook in eating animal flesh. For example, I ate at a "meat buffet" in Sao Paolo, Brazil; it was a tourist "must-do," I guess. Then there was the guinea pig I ate in Bolivia. I mention these occasions to say that I have not been perfect during my tenure as a vegetarian. Vegetables hold an interesting position at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. I've often heard them termed as "rabbit food," "hamster food," or "better to compost than eat." This language has influenced what we cook at the Catholic Worker. I remember Patrick telling me before I cooked for the first time to cook meat because no one would eat the food if it didn't have meat in it. I believed this for a long time, so I cooked meat even though I wouldn't eat it myself. A dear friend of mine convinced me that this was not consistent or ethical, and fortunately I do have control over what I can cook and what I cannot cook.

The first vegetarian meal I prepared

consisted of lentils, potatoes, summer squash,



Jakob with some veggie balls.

carrots, and broccoli. Rice was served on the side, along with a spinach salad. The lentils were

spiced with cumin, coriander, garam masala, salt, pepper, and a bit of cayenne. To measure the effectiveness of each meal, we observe the starting quantity, amount of people served, amount discarded in the trash, and amount left with after about one and a half to two hours from opening the house. The first meal was a success! Our guests enjoyed the meal enough to finish it! This encouraged me to continue preparing vegetarian meals. Ryna-Ria and I are usually co-chefs, so chopping vegetables and tubers doesn't take too much time.

Since the first meal, we have made pesto noodles, vegetarian lasagna, green curry, yellow curry, creamy coconut pesto, Mexican style beans and rice, brownies, spaghetti with tons of cheesy goodness, and Sopa de Mani (peanut soup). I usually base what I cook on the available vegetables and grains that are either donated or grown in our garden.

Other community members continue to cook meat, which makes our guests happy! At the Des Moines Catholic Worker, we always cook with what we have, and we hope it turns out delicious and nutritious every time!

A Memory with Howard Crow Eagle of Rose Bud and Pine Ridge and More.

By Norman Searah

Bob Cook's son took me on a rendezvous somewhere in Iowa. There were a lot of people around. Some were dressed up like Native Americans. People with all types of tents selling all types of things. I bought a red hat with a feather on it; it looked okay.

We saw someone with drums in his tent and people sitting around enjoying other people, the view, and other things. We saw more and went back to Des Moines.

We started to fill the van with stuff that we know students can use at schools. We drove to South Dakota to Pine Ridge to Rose Bud and checked into the Rose Bud Casino for the night to sleep.

The next morning we headed for Howard's father's house with the ISA student to work on the house and maybe talk to Gilbert. I learned that he was in World War II on D-Day where his boat almost sunk.

Then we started taking stuff to schools; St. Francis Indian School, Pine Ridge, and Red Cloud where Chief Red Cloud was buried in the nearby cemetery. We got to see much of both Pine Ridge and Rose Bud. We went to another school, not too far from KILI radio, where we dropped more school stuff.

Wounded Knee was down the road and can't be missed; it is a cemetery. I forgot how many were buried there. Women, men and chil-

dren were killed for unknown reasons.

I heard that they have a horse ride that takes place each year. We ended up taking his



sister home to the Meskwakis.

I've learned about Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

baptized as Catherine and informally known as a Lily of the Mohawks (1656-April 17 1680), is a Roman Catholic saint who was an Algonquin-Mohawk laywoman.

Nineteen died of small pox...

She was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI.

She walked from a village near the Mohawk river in New York, then to a Jesuit mission in Canada where she died. The small pox seemed to go away after she died. Today there are a lot of Jesuits in St. John's in Omaha college where we stayed.

There were a few times where I found out that a few priests go to Pine Ridge or other reservations and other parts of the country.

Maybe California or Nevada. I'm done with prayers and wishes if there are any Indians in Des Moines like in New York City. With the museum of Native Indian. We used to have women priests come to the Catholic Worker. I recall to eat lunch maybe? I remember the news talking about the first lady of the Arug war being killed leaving two children back at home alone. I felt sorry and prayed for no more wars.

I felt sorry for an Indian child that climbed up a post for a bird and both died. There was a pow wow for the child. I think creative dreamers and dancers danced in order to revive the child. I'm sorry for the child.

Reflections

By Araceli Bentizmoya

Four months ago, I arrived in the United States. Two weeks after my arrival, I started attending English classes and reading books in English to learn the language faster. I realized that writing and pronouncing words is very different compared to my mother tongue. I have problems with pronunciation. When I want to say something I am thinking in Spanish, I try to fix it in my head to say it in English. Learning English has gone very slowly. Fellow students in my class are also having difficulties.

Some of them have been taking classes for many months, others for years. In my classroom, there are a mixture of cultures. There are students from Sudan, Congo, Kenya, Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, China, Burma, El Salvador, and Mexico.

I am learning about their different cultures; the ways the women dress, and also their food. The women from Africa are very rooted in their customs. Those from China and Burma are very modern. All of them miss their countries, their families they left behind, and also their food.

Before coming to the United States, I had no idea about their cultures. The beautiful part about being here is the opportunities to learn and study one another's ways of life.

In my country, there are limits, and it is very sad to not have these opportunities to learn. It is a necessity to leave the country. It is sad they are cutting our wings because of systematic failure; a lack of vision.

I have classes four days out of the week, from 8:30 to 12:30. After class, I drop my books off in my room, check what I will eat for lunch, then hurry quickly out to the bus stop, as the bus passes by every 30 minutes. I have missed the bus several times; there goes another 30 minutes!

I tell the bus driver I need to get off, and

then I start walking. The walk usually takes between 15 to 20 minutes, it really depends on the weather. If there is snow or ice it could take longer. I am afraid of slipping and hurting myself. On my walk, I rarely see another person walking, sometimes there I see one or two people.

I arrive at a house to take care of two dogs, Millie and Barnie. They are small, but very happy to see me. Right when I arrive, I let them outside to do their business and maybe play some ball. Millie is



Annie and Araceli serving food at Dingman House

more active. She really enjoys playing with the ball. Bernie is smaller and more lazy. They are both good dogs. I spend some time with them. I am with the dogs three days out of the week in the afternoon. From Thursday to Sunday I volunteer at the Catholic Worker House. I am living in a house that serves people starting around three in the afternoon, taking care of the tables, desserts, making coffee, etc.

The majority of my time I am serving food to our guests. Some of them live in the neighborhood, while others live further out from the neighborhood. Some of our guests suffer from addiction,

and some have mental health issues.

This past week, one of our guests spoke with me for over three hours without stopping. My head hurt after that encounter. One of the more awkward encounters happened when I asked someone a question, and they respond normally, but the next minute their personality changed completely. One of our guests was talking to the wall, and I think he might be having a vision.

Another person that comes to eat will also sit down and write. They always do the same thing, and I am very curious to know what they write about. Maybe it is some poetry.

I watch and observe all the different personalities, and I've noticed there is a large portion of them that suffer from mental health problems.

I am very close to the majority of the people because I serve the food the majority of the time I am working. I am also around them when I am checking the tables and coffee. There are moments when I am very busy, but there are also moments when it is slow. In the slow moments, I can drink a cup of coffee and talk with some of the guests. I tend to talk with other Hispanics because of our shared language.

On Sundays, I attend Trinity de Las Americas because they have a bilingual service.

Pastor Alejandro gives a service in English and Spanish, and I enjoy this very much. I also get to know new people and deepen other friendships.

For me, being at the Catholic Worker has been a great experience to help, to work, and to serve our neighbors. I am thankful for this house of hospitality, a space to meet with friends and talk, to feel the heat of a warm house, and to have a hot plate. The beautiful part is that all are welcome! No matter your birth country, race, color, or physical condition, we treat all with respect.

One Glossy, One Old

By Jakob Whitson

Back in September, Frank, Ryna-Ria, and I made a two-day stop at the New York Catholic Worker, Maryhouse. It was a pit stop before heading to Princeton, New Jersey for a conference on drone warfare. The visit was wonderful, as I mentioned in an article in the previous *via pacis*.

While at the Worker, we spoke to many wonderful people, one being Bill Griffin, a regular columnist for the New York Catholic Worker newspaper. My first meeting with him was at the National Catholic Worker Gathering in Rochester, New York in July of 2018. We both sat in on a housing roundtable. I just remembered his well shined noggin (no offense, Bill).

Bill sent us home with a couple books, one being *Bread and Wine* by Ignazio Silone. It was a favorite book of Bill and Dorothy Day, yet a book I had not heard of before, unlike *The Brothers Karamazov*, a well known favorite of Day's. I thanked Bill for the book, unsure if I would read it because of the already long list of books I had back at home.

After being home from the New York trip for two weeks, *Bread and Wine* remained seated on the "catch all" desk by the front door. Eventually it made it upstairs to Ryna-Ria and

my personal bookshelf, and it remained there.

Two months later, Ryna-Ria and I visited Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Farm in



Bill's edition in the foreground and Brian's first edition lying below it

Maloy, Iowa. Winter was quickly approaching, so there was not much farm work to do. This presented an awesome opportunity because Brian and Betsy have a wealth of reading materials. Two days into our stay, Brian handed me an old and somewhat dusty book. It appeared to be the first print of some great title. Lo and behold, it was a first edition of *Bread and Wine*. Immediately, I remembered the glossy paperback copy of *Bread and Wine* Bill Griffin gave me two months back. Naturally, the book was put to the top of my reading list. I wish Dorothy and Bill's recommendation would have been enough. It is a great read for those struggling to reconcile Communist ideas and Catholic thought.

I will cherish these Catholic Worker synchronicities due to their authenticity and surrealness. I will also miss them. Ryna-Ria and I plan to take a leave of absence from the Des Moines Catholic Worker, maybe a permanent leave. We will be moving 180 miles south to Kansas City, Missouri to continue our spiritual journey at the Hare Krishna Temple.

I hope you understand the necessity of finding our way back to Godhead. Much Love!

STALL cont. from pg. 6

Sanders is proposing to use the tools forged by our settler-colonial, genocidal government in order to curb the racism, poverty, and murder committed by that very government! This contradiction is a result of Sanders' attempt to use the power of poor and working people to change what Marxists call the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, or the dictatorship of the capitalist class. The United States government is not a neutral organization that can be harnessed by any group of people; it exists to keep rich people rich and poor people poor. Despite the constant calls for "campaign finance reform," even if we could remove the open bribery which is a feature of the American political system, the normal functioning of elections and government is designed to work in the interests of rich people, not for you and me. The system is rigged, the table slanted, the cards all counted. Our government is for, by, and of, the extremely wealthy, and its institutions, like the Supreme Court, the Senate, and the Constitution, have class domination and racism in their very DNA.

To illustrate the point, let us imagine the best case scenario for Sanders. Let us suppose that he manages to overcome the machinations of the Democratic political elite, clinch that party's nomination, and defeat Trump in 2020. Let us suppose further that he still wants to push through "Medicare for All." In the best case scenario, the Democratic House, whose members have been somehow whipped into voting against the healthcare industry lobbyists who paused for many of their campaigns, takes action. It immediately passes concrete legislation crafted to provide every American with healthcare, regardless of their ability to pay.

The legislation reaches the Senate, now also in Democratic hands. It is introduced on the floor....and is filibustered indefinitely. Forty-one Republican Senators managed to hold back the most progressive edges of Obama's first two

years because of pure resentment and racial animus, and they can be counted on to stand even stronger against any truly progressive legislation. Unfortunately, it is demographically impossible for this situation to change in the next decade, at the most optimistic. As long as the Republican party manages to hold 41 seats in the Senate, any truly progressive legislation is dead on arrival.

Even if the Senate's hold could be overcome, to say nothing of the now Republican-dominated Supreme Court, any progressive legislation or government faces another, deeper problem. The American section of the capitalist class, one of the most bloodthirsty and reactionary in the world, won't take a Sanders presidency sitting down. An attempt to provide truly universal healthcare means the removal of rich men from power, the socialization of medicine, and vast increases in taxes on the ruling class. In short, it would mean a reorganization of the economy, at least in part.

The American capitalist class has vast resources at its disposal to dissuade moderate lawmakers from joining radicals in advancing progressive legislation. We need only look back to France's Mitterrand years to recognize the halting effects a capital strike can wreak on a left government. There is also a more dark possibility: in the 1930s, at the height of the historical New Deal, conservative businessmen plotted a fascist coup against Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a threat not to be taken lightly by a government proposing revolutionary transformation through the ballot box. This author's back-of-the-napkin math doesn't rate the left, including Sanders' supporters, as able, right now at least, to hold back the might of both the government's violence and right-wing militias that would likely be mobilized against us.

If Sanders' campaign is doomed to this failure, if his policies are too far to the right,

if his advance might even provoke a fascist resurgence, should the left simply ignore the campaign? I don't think we can afford it. When Sanders' aspirations are defeated, and they absolutely will be, whether by the Democratic Party at their convention, by Trump in November, by legislative and judicial holdups, or by the reaction of the capitalist class, there will be millions of his supporters who are primed for a properly revolutionary politics and seeking answers about why their electoral movement failed. If the radical left is there to respond, not with smug condescension, but with solidarity and integration into the concrete community organizing we are already doing, our generation may bear witness to the growth of a mass left movement not seen for more than a century here.

Though we might forget it when bickering amongst ourselves or stuck canvassing voters door-to-door, people are not moved to action or real commitment by argumentation and words alone. The building of class consciousness - the recognition that we are poor, that it is the rich that make it that way, and that by banding together, we can overthrow that relation - is not an individual phenomenon. It is forged not in coffee shops and doorways, but in mass struggle, in labor strikes, in resistance to police crackdowns, in radical protests, in fighting for our humanity together. For a sizable chunk of the American population, Bernie Sanders' campaign represents a real struggle to combat the amorphous forces that make their lives unlivable. If the reaction of the capitalist media to his campaign is any indication, it is a real struggle, at least for reforms, and one that he is fated to lose. However, his failure, when it comes, may engender the invigoration and new blood which the left so desperately needs to succeed.

Fourth Annual Armed Forces Day Events

What: *“From West Point to Anti-Empire”* with Ret. Major Danny Sjursen

When: Friday May 15 at 7 p.m.

Where: Phil Berrigan Catholic Worker House, 713 Indiana Ave, Des Moines, Iowa

The Des Moines Veterans For Peace and Catholic Workers are excited to announce that Ret. Major Danny Sjursen will be joining us for our Fourth Annual Armed Forces Day Rally and Direct Action. Major Danny will also be speaking the night before the rally at the Phil Berrigan Catholic Worker House at 7 p.m. All are welcome.



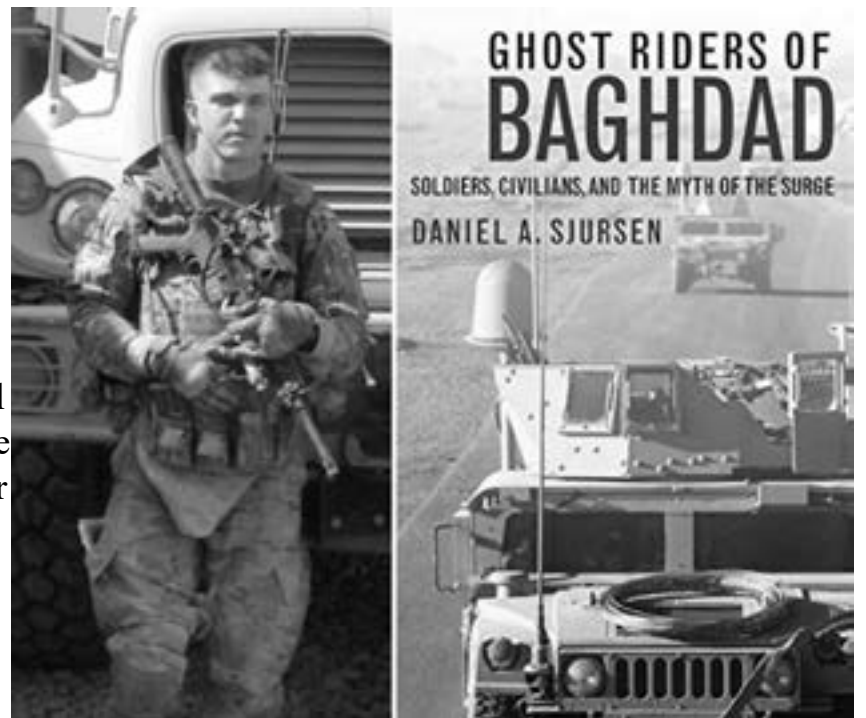
Ret. Major Danny Sjursen will share his transition story from new military recruit to West Point history professor to standing up against the very system he once served. Sjursen describes the United States as being an empire from the beginning, as some of America's most significant events that shaped the country worked to enforce the empire. All are welcome.

What: Fourth Annual Armed Forces Day Rally and Direct Action

When: Saturday May 16 at 3 p.m.

Where: Iowa Drone Command Center, 3100 McKinley Ave, Des Moines, Iowa

Plan on joining the Des Moines Veterans for Peace and the Catholic Workers for our “Honor Vets Ground Drones” Fourth Annual Armed Forces Day Rally and Direct Action at the main entrance of the Iowa Air Guard Drone Command Center. Speakers include Ret. Major Danny Sjursen, Iowa Veteran For Peace and member of local peace groups. The rally will end with a “line crossing” and blocking of the Drone Command's main entrance. All are welcome.



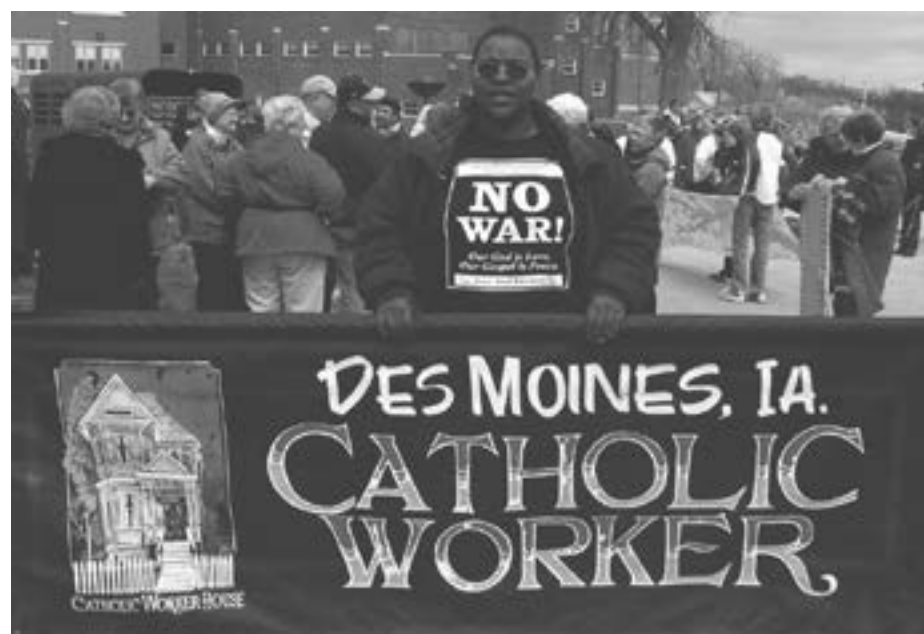
For more info contact:

Al Burney, Des Moines Veterans For Peace President <AlBurney1@hotmail.com> 515 528 1742

Frank Cordaro, Des Moines Catholic Worker <frank.cordaro@gmail.com> 515 490 2490

You can also connect directly with Ret. Major Danny Sjursen <dannysjursen@hotmail.com>

Catholic Peace Ministry Dingman Peace Award



When: March 28, Dinner at 6pm, Peace Award 7:30pm

Where: Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 2926 Beaver Ave., Des Moines

What: Food, Socializing, Peace Award Presentation, and Speaker, Johnny Zokovitch.

Carla Dawson is this years Dingman Peace Award recipient. She is a long-time peace and justice activist and educator.

“The Catholic Peace Ministry could not have picked better person to receive this year's Bishop Dingman Peace Award! Carla Dawson got her start in peace and justice work at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. She came as a guest and soon became a community member. She raised her three boys in our community. A natural leader, in time, Carla became our community's “franchise player,” the go-to person that made things happen. These were great years at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. We did a lot of peace and justice work and Carla was at the heart of it.” -Frank Cordaro

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Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance . . . without them, we burn out.

FOOD:

Fruit, Vegetables, Meat and Fish, Milk, Cheese, Salted Butter, Olive Oil, Sugar, Coffee, Creamer, Juice (sugar free), Salt, Black Pepper, Fresh Garlic, Soups and Stews (both canned and fresh). Leftovers from weddings, funerals and other social gatherings. . . .

MEAL PROVIDERS:

Provide a meal for 50-70 people once a month! Call or email for current openings. 515-214-1030, dm-catholicworker@gmail.com

HEALTH AND HY-

GIENE:

Feminine Hygiene Items, Diapers, Baby Formula, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Multivitamins, Antibiotic Ointment, Band-Aids, Lip balm.

TOILETRIES:

Disposable Razors, Shaving Cream, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion, Deodorant, Soap, Toothpaste. (Small sizes preferred for handout) Toothbrushes and Toilet Paper.

CLOTHING:

Underwear, Socks, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies, Coats, Work Pants. (All Sizes—especially big) Sleeping Bags, Blankets.

HOUSEHOLD

SUPPLIES:

Bleach, Laundry Detergent, Environmentally-Friendly

Dish Soap, Murphy's Oil

Soap, Pinesol, Trash Bags, Brooms, Rugs, Candles, Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs, Aluminum Foil, Plastic Wrap, Sandwich and Freezer Bags, Bath Towels, Playing Cards, Candles, Phone Chargers.

HOUSE REPAIRS:

With four old houses, there are plenty of projects large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers—individuals or groups—with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.

LIBRARY:

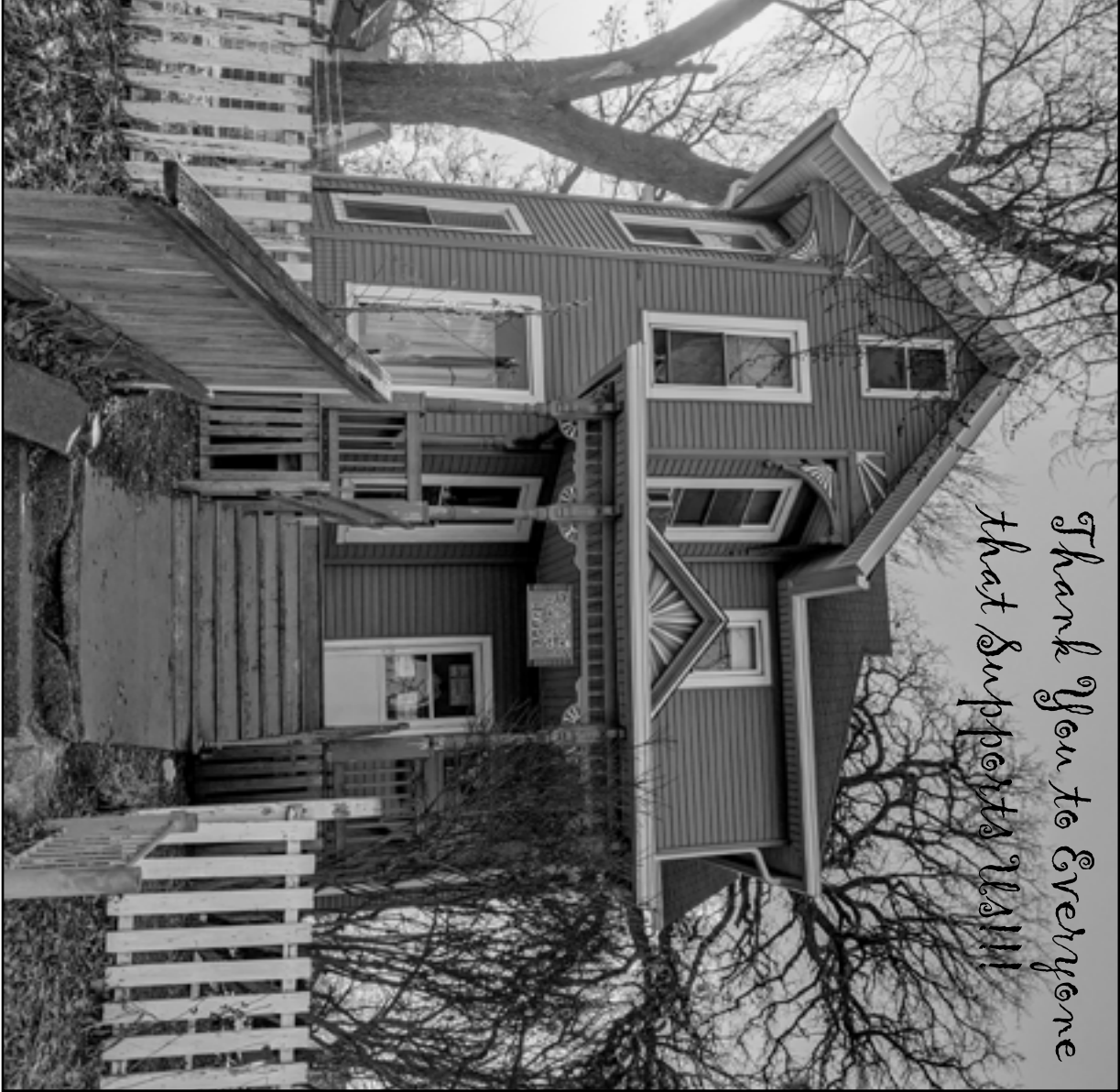
Peace and Justice books for the Berrigan House Library.

\$CASH MONIES:

Cash donations are essential to pay our property taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance of property, upkeep and gas for two vans, purchase of needed supplies, our community gardening and for the continued publication and mailing of the via pacis, a good 20% of our annual expenses.

DMCW WEBSITE

The DMCW website is currently under construction. Visit www.viapacis.wordpress.com for an online version of the Via Pacis.



*Thank You to Everyone
that Supports Us!!!*

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We would not be able to keep our lovely house of hospitality open if it were not for all our guests, volunteers, donors, and friends.